



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA--UAW

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May 6, 1998

IN REPLY REFER TO
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Dear Senator/Representative:

The UAW strongly supports the Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998 (S. 1890; H.R. 3605) sponsored by Senators Daschle and Kennedy and Representative Dingell. We urge you to cosponsor and support this effort to provide basic consumer protections to individuals covered under private health plans.

For more than a decade working families have lived through a vicious cycle of reduced health plan choices, more restrictions on the ability to get necessary medical treatment and an emphasis on cost-cutting at the expense of quality. The Patients' Bill of Rights Act would address these serious problems by establishing certain basic rights for consumers of health care. Under this legislation, individuals would be guaranteed coverage for emergency services, access to specialists for needed care, and the right to appeal health care decisions with which they disagree. Health care professionals would be able to discuss all treatment options with their patients, advocate on their behalf and raise quality concerns with appropriate entities without fear of reprisal. Health care plans would be required to offer an adequate network of providers, to provide greater information to consumers and to ensure the confidentiality of patients' medical records.

The UAW believes these common sense reforms are urgently needed to ensure that patients receive high quality health care services. Accordingly, we urge you to cosponsor and support the Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998 (S. 1890; H.R. 3605).

Thank you for considering our views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Alan Reuther
Legislative Director

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